

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) delivered a morning hour speech today on Republican efforts to attack federal employees unfairly and single them out to pay more than their fair share. See below for a link to the video and his remarks as prepared for delivery:

[Click here to watch the video.](#)

“I rise out of deep concern that this Congress continues to ask one group to sacrifice to bring down our nation's deficit while not asking others to contribute. With all of the challenges we face today on a national scale, we ought to ensure that those who help devise solutions and carry them out receive the recognition they are due. They should not be constantly subjected to the kind of verbal attacks and legislative assaults we have seen over the past couple of years.

“I am speaking, of course, about America's public servants. Those who work in civilian government positions are no less important to our safety, health, prosperity, and general well-being as their military counterparts who protect our freedom. Federal civilian employees make certain that the products we buy and prescription drugs we use are safe. They perform critical research to advance the fight against cancer and disease. They help our farmers and ranchers access new markets for their goods. They see millions of passengers travel safely across our skies and keep watch over our ports and border crossings. They ensure a fair playing field for banks and businesses and enforce the rules we have in place to preserve the health of our air and water from pollution.

“So many of the public functions we often take for granted are the purview of the hard-working men and women who constitute our federal workforce. These are middle class Americans who have, in many cases, chosen to serve their country by lending their talents and skills – some for a short time, others for their whole careers.

“As an American I am proud of the work they do, and as a Member of Congress from Maryland I am proud to represent a great number of them in this House. But for those who believe that

most or even many of our federal workers live here in Washington, Maryland, and Virginia, let me set the record straight. Eighty-five percent of federal employees live and work outside of the greater Washington area. They provide essential services to neighbors in communities in all fifty states and in every single one of our districts.

“While everything must be on the table when addressing the budget, I am deeply disappointed that Republicans continue to attack these public servants unfairly and single them out to sacrifice while not asking others, including the wealthiest Americans, to share in the burden of deficit reduction. When middle class families across the country are struggling to make ends meet, federal employees have already accepted a two-year pay freeze. This comes on top of salaries that are already lower than those for comparable private sector jobs. In fact, the Federal Salary Council’s annual report last month found that federal workers are paid, on average, 26.3 percent less than private sector workers.

“America’s public servants are already making sacrifices, because they love this country and recognize that, when times are tight, everyone has to pitch in. I hope Republicans in this house will join with me in thanking them for their service and recognizing how much they are already sacrificing instead of targeting them for criticism purely as a result of ideology. A belief in smaller government does not grant one license to diminish the contributions made by those who serve in government.

“We must always remember that we are blessed, as Lincoln said, with a government of the people and by the people, and there is a bond that ties us together – the one who serves and the one who benefits from that service. It is the bond of a neighbor and that of a fellow American.”